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What made you smile today?

Broaden and Build Theory of Positive Emotions

Positivity is not just the icing on the cake!

It can help:

- broaden our minds
- build personal resources
- bounce back from life's challenges

Barbara Fredrickson - Center for Positive Organizations Center for Positive Organizations (umich.edu)

Emotional Balance

Approx. 3:1 ratio of positive to negative emotions helps us to flourish

Barbara Fredrickson - Center for Positive Organizations Center for Positive Organizations (umich.edu)

Reflection

- 1. Think about a time when a close friend was grieving/feeling loss. How would you respond to your friend?
- 2. Think about a time when you were grieving/feeling loss. How do you typically respond to yourself?
- 3. Did you notice a difference? How might things change if you responded to yourself like a good friend?

The need for self-compassion

- If there was ever a time to be kind to ourselves, it would be during the experience of our grief.
- However, it is not uncommon that we become highly self-critical and particularly unforgiving to ourselves while we are grieving.

Self-criticism during grief

- I am grieving incorrectly
- My grief is taking too long
- Something is wrong with me
- I handled things poorly with my loved one
- I'm dwelling on what could have been different – what I should or shouldn't have done

"It isn't what happens to us that causes us to suffer; it's what we say to ourselves about what happens"

Pema Chodron

Softening grief with self compassion

- Self compassion is not an antidote for grief but it can soften the hard edges of our grief
- The goal is not to push aside, dismiss or ignore your difficult feelings
- It is to treat yourself and talk to yourself in the same way that you would a trusted friend

What is Self-Compassion?

Mindfulness - Aware that we are suffering

Common Humanity - Realising that we are not alone – we're human, and everyone suffers

Kindness - Being kind to ourselves - friendly, generous, gentle, caring and helpful

<u>Self-Compassion – Dr. Kristin Neff</u>

Self Compassion

- Self-compassion is simply the process of turning compassion inward.
- We are kind and understanding rather than harshly self-critical when we fail, make mistakes or feel inadequate.
- We give ourselves support and encouragement rather than being cold and judgmental when challenges and difficulty arise in our lives.

<u>Self-Compassion – Dr. Kristin Neff</u>

Research on Self Compassion

Self-compassion is one of the most powerful sources of coping and resilience we have available to us, radically improving our mental and physical wellbeing.

<u>Self-Compassion – Dr. Kristin Neff</u>



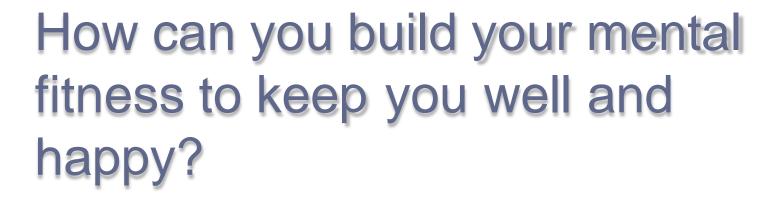
- Self criticism does not help to motivate us.
 - Just like you wouldn't be harsh and unkind with a child to help them reach their goals, being gentle and encouraging is more motivating.
- Self compassion can be fierce as well as gentle – you can fiercely protect yourself and your boundaries just like a mummy bear protects her cub.

What self compassion is not

- Self pity
- Self indulgence
- Self esteem

Putting self compassion into action

- Be present in your grief
- Remember that suffering and grief are both an important and inevitable part of being human.
- Meet your grief with kindness.



Without it feeling like something else to be done!!

Being Present

Wandering mind not a happy mind – Harvard Gazette

Mindfulness is simple:

It's not about what you do. It's about how you do things.

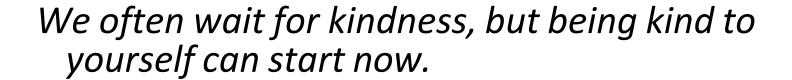
RAIN practice for Self Compassion

- R = Recognise how you're feeling
- A = Allow what you're feeling
- I = Investigate what it feels like
- N = Nurture yourself with understanding and care

Tara Brach, Radical Compassion

Allowing yourself to be yourself

What do you truly love to do?



Charlie Mackesy, The boy, the mole, the fox and the horse

Suggested Reading

- Mindful Compassion by Paul Gilbert and Choden
- Self Compassion by Kristin Neff
- Radical Compassion by Tara Brach
- The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion by Christopher Germer
- Positivity by Barbara Friedrickson